




DAVID SANDERS, Ph.D.
Director

County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
425 Shatto Place -- Los Angeles, California 90020
(213) 351-5602

April 7, 2006

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To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
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From: David B. Sanders, Ph.D. 
Director

DCFS MULTI-AGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

We are exceptionally pleased to provide you with the attached letter, dated March 14, 2006, from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Narcotics Bureau commending the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Multi-Agency Response Team's (MART) personnel for their demeanor, professionalism and expertise, which ultimately assists in preparation of stronger criminal cases and, more importantly, protects abused and neglected children through consistent, timely joint responses to at-risk children in narcotic, gang, and/or weapons-related warrant-executed investigations.

In October 2003 and March 2004, the Board instructed DCFS to expand its working collaboration with independent law enforcement agencies in Los Angeles County, similarly to what had been established with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; and directed DCFS to seek the dedication of resources necessary to establish MART. DCFS successfully implemented MART in January 2004 and is currently co-located with various law enforcement agencies throughout Los Angeles County.

The MART concept is the only one of its kind in the nation and puts Los Angeles County in the forefront of establishing a true partnership between law enforcement and child welfare. MART responds expeditiously to warrants executed by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, the Los Angeles Police Department and other independent law enforcement agencies where children are suspected to be at risk due

to gang, weapons and/or other drug-related factors; and works with community-based organizations to refer and provide appropriate services to impacted children. In addition, the MART unit has been asked to participate in operations led by the Federal Bureau of Investigations, Federal Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms, Federal Housing and Urban Development, the City Attorney's office and California State Parole.

In 2004 and 2005, DCFS-MART responded to a total of 876 referrals and assessed the safety of 2,256 children. 52% of the children who were identified during the MART special operations were children under the age of 5. 43% of MART referrals were closed after a 30-day period when initial concerns that led to intervention were stabilized. 10% of MART referrals led to the development of voluntary contracts for non-court intervention. 47% of MART referrals resulted in the temporary removal and protective custody of children for Dependency Court intervention.

Achievement of improved outcomes in safety, permanency and a reduced reliance on detention requires support from and accountability of other systems. Linking our child protection investigations to those of law enforcement has been critical to improving the quality of the initial information necessary to assure safety for children. DCFS sincerely appreciates the Board's support and recognition of MART by honoring its staff with scrolls presented during public Board meetings. We look forward to continued MART successes in order to assure the level of service delivery that the children and families of Los Angeles County richly deserve.

For any questions, please feel free to contact me at (213) 351-5600, or your staff may contact Helen Berberian, Board Relations Manager at (213) 351-5530.

DS:hb
Attachment

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors



LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF

County of Los Angeles
Sheriff's Department Headquarters
4700 Ramona Boulevard
Monterey Park, California 91754-2169



March 14, 2006

David Sanders, Ph.D.
Director
Department of Children and Family Services
425 Shatto Place
Los Angeles, California 90040

Dear Dr. Sanders:

I am writing to thank and commend the Multi Agency Response Team (MART) of the Department of Children and Family Services. In the past several months, MART has responded to many requests from Narcotics Bureau detectives to scenes where children have been exposed to narcotics, dangerous drugs and firearms. All of the MART members have acted enthusiastically and professionally and each has established a strong and trusted working rapport with our detectives.

The resources provided by MART have allowed our detectives to focus on the criminal aspects of their cases while at the same time MART has been on the scene to gather information and proceed with the removal of children found in unfit homes and environments. While MART's response has assisted us to prepare stronger criminal cases, more importantly many children found in dangerous environments have been protected.

We thank and commend all of the MART field personnel and in particular Mr. Emilio Mendoza, the coordinating supervisor, for responding to our requests in such a timely and professional manner. Their demeanor, professionalism and expertise has resulted in great confidence and respect from our detectives for MART and has significantly improved our service to the citizens of Los Angeles County.

Sincerely,

LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF

William M. Ryan, Captain
Commander, Narcotics Bureau

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DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

A Tradition of Service